

5/30/2020



Dear Fellow Bread & Broth Volunteers,

I hope this note finds you all well and that this time of 'shelter in place' has inspired you to finish all of those projects/'to do lists', start some new hobbies, and follow through with those plans to start a garden, read the latest best seller, or explore the many beautiful hiking trails that the Tahoe basin is so blessed with.

Just wanted to bring you up to date with how Bread & Broth's Covid-19 emergency food programs have been going for the last ten weeks. Both our Monday and Friday food bag giveaways and the B&B 4 Kids program have been very successful in helping supplement food supplies for many of our community members. Thanks to our very generous monetary donors and volunteers, the Monday/Friday food giveaway has served over 2,635 individuals and families (an average of 265 bags per week) and the Kids' program is currently distributing weekend bags of food to over 440 children on Fridays.

The quantity of food given away on Mondays and Fridays is very generous and consists of at least four bags per individual/family and includes milk, eggs and butter, a large bag of fruits and vegetables, a third bag of breads and pastries, and a bag of staples which includes meats or soups, rice or pasta, nutrition bars, canned vegetables, etc. Depending on the number of individuals in the family, extra dairy items, meats, soups, salads and other items are added to the bags as they are being distributed.

In early March, the B&B 4 Kids program was giving weekend bags of food to 176 LTUSD students and over the past 10 weeks, that number has grown to over 440 weekend bags. The Kids' bags are packed every other Wednesday (that means the packing team is assembling over 840 bags per shift) and then every Friday, volunteers are handing out the bags at the LTUSD food bus stops and the 4 school food distribution sites. The weekend bags are filled with kid-friendly foods such as peanut butter, jelly, cereal, soups, canned chicken and tuna, nutrition bars, treats, and protein bars. The food selection varies each week, but the bags are filled with foods that are kid's favorites.

Providing all of this food is a 'gift of caring' by over 120 very dedicated volunteers. The volunteers are assigned to one of four team activities. The Food Coordination team purchases food, collects donated food and sets up the tables for the Monday/Friday bagging. The Monday/Friday Food Giveaway teams pack the bags and hand them out at Grace Hall's foyer. The Kids' program has three teams; one that purchases food, the second team puts the food bags together, and the Friday team drives the food bags to the bus stops and the four school sites to hand out to the children.

Every volunteer who is helping during this very difficult time is very much appreciated and deserves our thanks. At some point in time, there are plans to acknowledge all of the COVID-19 emergency volunteers and all of the donors who have made monetary and food donations. For now, I would like to give a major 'shout out' to the Team Leads who have been coordinating and leading the various teams - Roberta Strachan (Food Coordination); Sabine Hardin, Brandi Bannister, and Janet Jarvis (Monday/Friday Food Giveaways); Cheryl Breitwieser (Kids Food Procurement and Packing); and Paula Peterson and Meg Peart (Kids Bag Distribution). Without these outstanding Leads, there would be no B&B COVID-19 Emergency Food Service.

The first priority of Bread & Broth's COVID-19 emergency response is the health and safety of our volunteers. To meet this goal, our volunteers are vetted for health issues and 'social distancing' practices. In addition, gloves, and masks are required while volunteering and for the majority of our teams, volunteers are only permitted on one volunteer shift every 14 days.

With all of the recent changes and relaxing of COVID-19 guidelines, Bread & Broth will be evaluating our food programs and making adjustments if necessary. Whatever next steps we take, I can assure you that we will continue our mission of easing hunger in our community. With so many of our neighbors struggling financially, it is very apparent how very grateful they are for the support and food bags provided by Bread & Broth.

Stay well and thank you for your continued support of Bread & Broth.

Sincerely,
Carol Gerard
Director, Bread & Broth